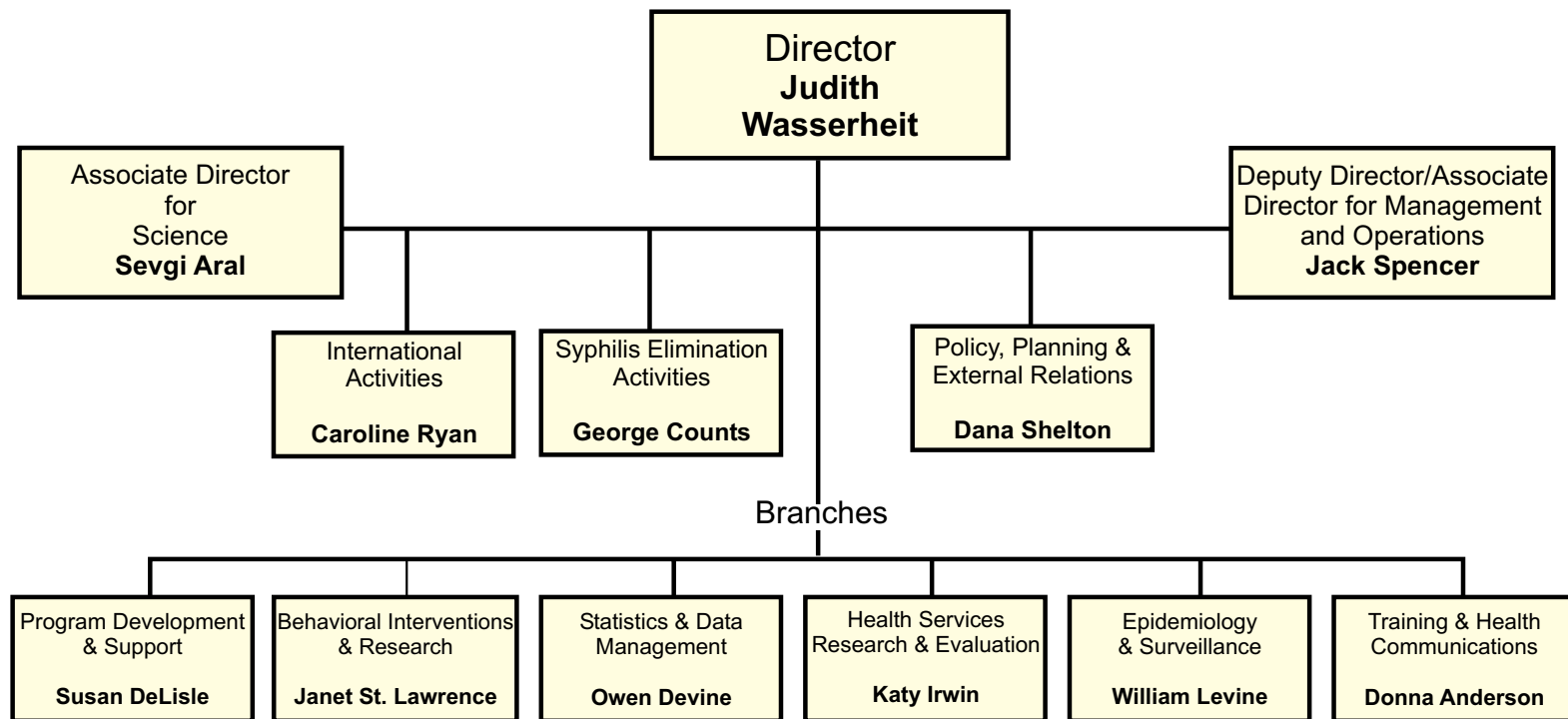


Division of STD Prevention



Syphilis Elimination

Background: The persistence of high rates of syphilis, a disease that is easily diagnosed and treated, is a sentinel event indicating a breakdown in the most basic public health capacity to control infectious diseases and ensure reproductive health. The syphilis elimination initiative will help rebuild this capacity by identifying this breakdown, rebuilding trust in the public health system, and forging community partnerships to help design and implement local strategies.

Syphilis elimination offers us a chance to: 1) reduce one of the most glaring racial disparities in public health; 2) help prevent HIV transmission; 3) improve infant health; 4) save almost \$1 billion annually in health care costs associated with treatment of syphilis and HIV; and 5) enhance collaborations at the federal and local levels.

Accomplishments: From 1997-2000, there has been a 28% reduction in the number of primary and secondary (P&S) syphilis cases, with a 9% annual decrease seen in 2000. There has also been a 61% reduction in congenital syphilis cases, and a 44% drop in the black-white ratio.

Three demonstration sites were set up to field test the syphilis elimination program. Each site is projecting a 20%-30% decrease in cases of P&S syphilis from 1999 to 2000, compared to a 9% decline nationally.

- The Davidson County demonstration site in Nashville, Tennessee, has embraced a broad approach, involving five working groups comprised of schools, the faith community, health care and social service agencies, and corrections. Their efforts have resulted in a 22% decrease in P&S syphilis from 1999 to 2000.
- The Wake County demonstration site in Raleigh, North Carolina, has a heavy emphasis on forging collaborations with corrections and community-wide education. Wake County has achieved a 31% decrease in P&S syphilis from 1999 to 2000.
- The Marion County demonstration site in Indianapolis, Indiana, involves a multi-agency coalition that has developed a comprehensive media and outreach campaign. In 1999 and 2000, Marion County led the nation in cases of P&S syphilis, but in the past year has achieved a 23% decrease in cases.

Syphilis elimination is not solely a CDC effort. It involves other federal agencies, such as NIJ, NIH, SAMSHA, and HRSA. One such model of interagency collaboration is the HRSA Community Health Outreach Education Services (CHORES) Project. CHORES is a multi-agency effort that links community action agencies and community health clinics with health departments; integrates health promotion, education, and disease prevention into primary care; and has five sites located in areas of high syphilis morbidity. In addition, they have developed a HRSA-wide syphilis elimination implementation plan, featuring enhanced testing and treating in all supported sites.

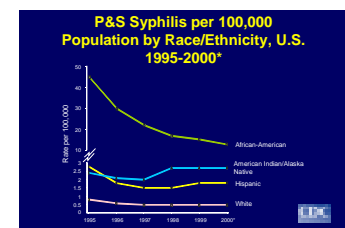
Challenges: Challenges in achieving syphilis elimination include:

- New mini outbreaks of syphilis among MSM in several cities (Seattle, Los Angeles, San Francisco) potentially jeopardize advances toward elimination made in these areas; and
- Rates of syphilis have gradually risen among Hispanics/Latinos, while falling among African Americans, and remaining level among whites. Surveillance efforts and collaborations with Hispanic/Latino agencies and organizations must be increased.

Progress on Syphilis Elimination (1997 – 2000)

	1997	1998	1999	2000*	Reduction 1997-2000
P & S syphilis cases	8556	7017	6786	6180	28%
Congenital syphilis cases	1075	838	556	421	61%
Counties responsible for 50%	31	28	25	22	29%
Black/White ratio	43:1	34:1	29:1	24:1	44%

* projected, provisional data based on Week 51, 2000



National Syphilis Plan Projected Budget Needs

• FY 2002 Budget Request	\$1.5 million
• FY 2002 Needs	\$9.0 million
– \$4.0 million — full funding	
– \$5.0 million — funding new challenges, including syphilis among new population groups	

Infertility Prevention

Background: Prior to the mid-1980s, STD control activities focused primarily on men with syphilis, and gonorrhea. An increased focus on chlamydia prevention occurred in the late 1980s due to a convergence of the following:

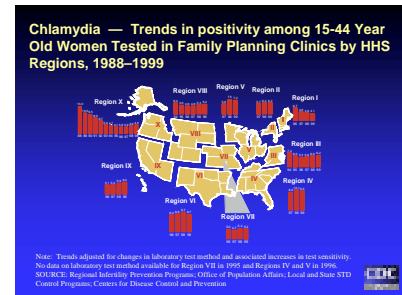
- Increased recognition of chlamydia as a widespread problem with significant female reproductive and infant morbidity;
- Availability of inexpensive chlamydia tests and effective treatment;
- Increased understanding of the need for widespread screening due to the asymptomatic nature of chlamydia (75% of women and 50% of men infected with chlamydia are asymptomatic).

Accomplishments: There have been significant accomplishments in program, policy, and research.

- Program has expanded to screen and treat approximately 50% of young women in 20 states and 20% in 30 states.
- A quality prevalence monitoring system has been established with more than 1,600 family planning clinics. Other sites are also submitting data including Job Corps, juvenile detention centers, prenatal sites and the Indian Health Service.
- The chlamydia screening measure made it to the full reporting set for HEDIS 2000. The measure is the percentage of enrolled sexually active women ages 15-25 years who are tested for chlamydia once a year.
- Research studies have been initiated to better characterize determinants of chlamydia transmission and to assess male screening as a strategy to reduce disease in women.

Challenges: There are still many challenges and issues facing STD-related infertility prevention:

- Disease trends, including: 1) continuing high burden of chlamydial infections; 2) increases in gonorrhea for the last two years; and 3) lack of morbidity and prevalence data in MCOs;
- Limited expansion of screening to women in family planning programs in the most populous states due to minimal funding increases. The availability of screening programs for men is virtually nonexistent;
- High cost of the most sensitive and specific laboratory tests for chlamydia and gonorrhea. Acquiring reimbursement for screening activities is difficult for most public health programs and laboratories;
- Emergence of decreased susceptibility of chlamydia and gonorrhea to Azithromycin; and
- Gonorrhea screening guidelines are needed to better target scarce resources.



Genital HPV Infection

Background: Genital HPV is probably the most common STD in the U.S. Approximately 20 million people are infected, with 5.5 million new infections occurring each year. Of persons ages 15-49 years, 15% are currently infected. Overall, 50%-75% of sexually active men and women acquire genital HPV infection at some point in their lives. There is no cure and no vaccine, although vaccine development is promising. New tests are available to detect “high-risk” types of HPV (related to cervical cancer) in women.

Accomplishments: Despite limited resources, CDC has made significant progress:

- In 1999, CDC convened an external consultants’ meeting to prioritize prevention activities and research needs. This meeting produced *Prevention of Genital HPV Infection and Sequelae: Report of an External Consultants’ Meeting*, a comprehensive 40-page report on prevention and research priorities.
- In 2000, CDC completed a large pilot HPV serosurvey in collaboration with NCID’s Division of Viral and Rickettsial Diseases. This survey using sera from NHANES-III, showed that 18% of women and 8% of men in the U.S. have HPV-16 antibody. Black women ages 20-29 years have the highest seroprevalence (36%).
- CDC is finalizing plans to add HPV testing into the new NHANES .

Challenges: Challenges include:

- Gaps in scientific knowledge, including: 1) significance of a positive HPV test; 2) risk factors for HPV persistence, which is a key determinant of progression of HPV infection to cervical cancer; 3) effectiveness of condoms; and 4) lack of available and effective therapy; and
- Widespread misinformation about all aspects of HPV and its consequences (including transmission, diagnosis, treatment, and prevention) among health care providers as well as patients and the general public.

STD Prevention for Adolescents

Background: The burden of sexually transmitted disease falls heavily on our nation's young people. Rates of the most common STDs are disproportionately high among adolescents. These high rates are due to a combination of biological and behavioral risk factors that peak during adolescence, as well as the challenges faced in providing STD prevention for adolescents. Our increased understanding of these risks and challenges places us in a unique position to move forward with new prevention efforts.

Rates of most common STDs are disproportionately high among adolescents.

- Highest rates of chlamydia and gonorrhea among youngest women
- Proportions of 15-19 year olds infected extremely high
 - Chlamydia Prevalence Monitoring Project: 6.36% (range 3.05-18.52)
 - National surveillance data: 2.5% of all females, 8% of African-American females

Accomplishments: Prevention for adolescents has been the focus of a number of ongoing research projects within the division. DSTDP has worked toward improved disease monitoring among adolescents, more effective behavioral interventions, integration of STD, HIV and teen pregnancy prevention, and improved programs and services. In addition, a national expert panel on adolescents and STD prevention was convened in September 2000, to expand the existing knowledge base and to assist in defining future directions.

We are moving forward in a number of ways, including:

- Collaborations with other CIOs to augment school-based STD education;
- The initiation of a multi-level intervention trial, guided by a workgroup with representatives from DSTDP, DHAP-SE, DHAP-IRS, DASH, and DRH. This multi-level approach will include efforts to (1) improve systems like schools and medical institutions to better serve adolescents; (2) increase parent involvement in STD prevention by improving family communication regarding sexual issues, increasing parental monitoring and family cohesion, and increasing parental awareness of the health care needs of their adolescents; and (3) facilitate community involvement and mobilization of resources for STD prevention efforts; and
- Collaboration with NIH and other federal agencies to evaluate the effectiveness of prevention and control strategies.

Challenges: Challenges include:

- Identifying and removing the social, financial and political barriers to successful STD prevention among adolescents;
- Identifying and removing impediments to accessing health care and STD prevention services by adolescents;
- Utilization of existing services must be improved; and
- Ambivalence concerning appropriate information for adolescents regarding STD prevention leads to confusing and conflicting messages.

Performance Measurement for STD Prevention Programs

Background: A common system of measurement holds great potential for STD prevention. CDC's goal is to develop common measures for all 65 project areas that would require annual reporting. This will provide a strategic "snapshot" of how the projects are doing and where STD prevention is going. This system will facilitate quality improvement, permit systematic assessment of the STD program, and provide feedback to management and policymakers.

Accomplishments: Development of an STD measurement system is currently underway:

- There is an ongoing collaborative effort between CDC and the National Coalition of STD Directors (NCSD; representatives from NC, CA, NE, IL, Los Angeles, CT, DE), involving conference calls every 2 weeks and meetings in Atlanta;
- A logic model has been developed that serves as the foundation for the development of the measurement system;
- Pilot projects are being developed to evaluate and refine candidate measures and determine the burden associated with the collection of data requested;
- The system will be phased in, beginning with the Program Announcement for FY 2003;
- Both "common" and "project specific" measures will be included;
- The system will track performance over time and assist with identifying needs for technical assistance.

Challenges: There are concerns in the field related to performance measurement. This will be addressed by:

- Implementing pilot projects, which are being initiated in 2001 to evaluate and refine candidate measures;
- Maintaining the involvement of the National Coalition of STD Directors in assessing appropriateness, utility, and feasibility of candidate measures, and in the decisions about which measures to include in future Program Announcements; and
- Developing and providing training and software support. Although there will be no punitive actions based on "measures," there will be accountability for "plans" and "actions," rather than results. Comparisons will be with "baselines" not with performance of other project areas.

Key Research Findings

The Internet as a Newly Emerging Risk Environment for Sexually Transmitted Diseases

A recent publication by DSTDP staff ⁽¹⁾ compared risk of STD transmission for persons who seek sex partners on the Internet with risk for persons not seeking sex partners on the Internet and found people who seek sex using the Internet to be at greater risk for STDs than those who do not seek sex on the Internet. The comparison was based on cross-sectional survey data collected from clients of the Denver Public Health HIV Counseling and Testing Site in Colorado. The results indicated that Internet sex seekers were more likely to be men and homosexual than those not seeking sex via the Internet. Internet sex seekers reported more previous STDs, more partners, more anal sex, and more sexual exposure to men, men who have sex with men and partners known to be HIV positive, than those not seeking sex via the Internet.

¹McFarlane M, Bull SS, Rietmeijer CA. The Internet as a newly emerging risk environment for sexually transmitted diseases. *Journal of the American Medical Association* 2000, 284(4):443-446.

Sexual Mixing Patterns in the Spread of Gonococcal and Chlamydial Infections

Recently, a number of scientific articles have highlighted the role of patterns of sexual connections for STD transmission dynamics. Recent findings described the effects of sexual mixing across age, race-ethnicity, socioeconomic status and sexual activity groups on risk for gonorrhea and chlamydial infection⁽²⁾. Based on data collected through face-to-face interviews with STD patients and STD clinic attendees in Seattle, Washington, the authors reported that partnerships discordant in terms of age, race/ethnicity, socioeconomic status and number of partners were associated with significant risk for gonorrhea and chlamydial infection. In this study, in low-prevalence subpopulations, within-subpopulation mixing was associated with chlamydial infection, and direct links with high prevalence subpopulations were associated with gonorrhea. These findings show that mixing patterns influence the risk of specific infections and should be included in risk assessments for individuals and in the design of screening, health education, and partner notification strategies for populations.

²Aral SO, Hughes JP, Stoner B, Whittington W, Handsfield HH, Anderson RM, Holmes KK. Sexual mixing patterns in the spread of gonococcal and chlamydial infections. *American Journal of Public Health* 1999, 89(6):825-832.

Alcohol Policy and Sexually Transmitted Disease Rates - United States, 1981-1995

Teenagers and young adults are at higher risk for acquiring sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) than older adults, and this risk is even higher for young people who consume alcohol ⁽³⁾. If alcohol consumption does promote risky sexual behavior (through disinhibition due to the effects of alcohol), then government alcohol policies (such as alcohol taxation and minimum legal drinking age requirements) that discourage teen drinking might reduce STD incidence in teenagers and young adults. This study examined the association between gonorrhea incidence rates and alcohol policy in all 50 states and the District of Columbia for the years 1981 to 1995. Over this period, a statistically significant majority of the state beer tax increases were followed by a decrease in the gonorrhea rate (as compared to states without a beer tax increase) rate in young adults (24 of 36 States in the 15-19 year age group and 26 of 36 states in the 20-24 year age group), and this relationship was more pronounced for gonorrhea rates in men than in women. Similarly, a majority of the drinking age increases were followed by a relative proportional decrease in the gonorrhea rate, and this majority was statistically significant in the 15-19 year age group (29 of 44 states) but not the 20-24 year age group (18 of 33 states). A regression analysis supported these findings, as higher beer taxes were associated with lower gonorrhea rates in young adults in both age groups, and drinking age increases were associated with lower gonorrhea rates in the 15-19 year age group. The model estimates indicated that tax increases of \$0.20 per six pack of beer and \$1.00 per gallon of liquor tax may be associated with 2 to 9 percent reductions in gonorrhea incidence rates per year.

³Chesson HW, Harrison P, Irwin KL, Kassler WJ, Shelton D. Alcohol policy and sexually transmitted disease rates - United States, 1981-1995. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* 2000; 49(16):346-349.

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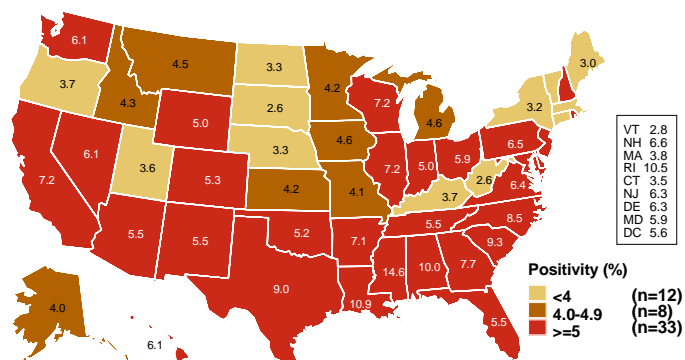
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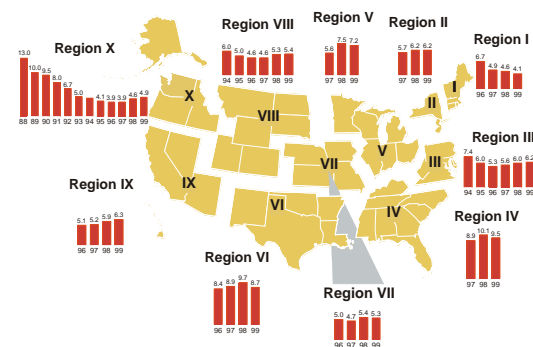
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Chlamydia — Positivity among 15-24 year old women tested in family planning clinics by state, 1999



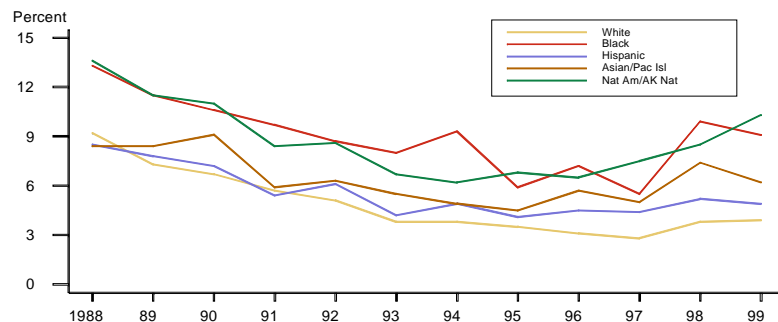
Note: States reported chlamydia positivity data on at least 500 women aged 15-24 years screened during 1999 except for Rhode Island; for Puerto Rico, - chlamydia positivity data were reported for August-December only.
SOURCE: Regional Infertility Prevention Programs; Office of Population Affairs; Local and State STD Control Programs; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Chlamydia — Trends in positivity among 15-44 year old women tested in family planning clinics by HHS regions, 1988-1999



Note: Trends adjusted for changes in laboratory test method and associated increases in test sensitivity. No data on laboratory test method available for Region VII in 1995 and Regions IV and V in 1996.
SOURCE: Regional Infertility Prevention Programs; Office of Population Affairs; Local and State STD Control Programs; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Chlamydia — Positivity among women tested in family planning clinics by race and ethnicity: Region X, 1988-1999



Note: Women who met screening criteria were tested. Trends not adjusted for changes in laboratory test method in 1994 and 1999 and associated increases in test sensitivity.
SOURCE: Regional Infertility Prevention Program: Region X Chlamydia Project (Alaska, Idaho, Oregon and Washington)

Chlamydia — Reported rates per 100,000 population by race/ethnicity: United States, 1999

